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WINTER 2012

# HOME

SASKATOON

## REFLECTION

Backyard Rinks

## SELECTION

Trendy Colours

## DESIGN STYLE

Eclectic Arts & Crafts Home







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# INSIDE OUR HOME

- 4 HOME Front**  
Inside this issue – at a glance.
- 6 Our Reader Panel**  
Helping us choose what you'll want to read.
- 8 Homeowners and the Law**  
The "no-throw-snow zone".
- 10 Backyard Rinks**  
No lock-outs. And the tickets are free.
- 16 The Luxe**  
Penthouse elegance. Broadway appeal.
- 22 Colour Forecasting**  
Colour is big business. Don't be caught off-hue.
- 28 HOME Food: The Story of a Winter Stew**  
Make winter much more palatable.
- 34 Who You Gonna Call?**  
A quick guide to home professionals.
- 39 Fireplaces**  
Put on the chestnuts.
- 43 The Eclectic Dream Home**  
Who says you can't?
- 49 The Latest British Invasion**  
Last time it was the Beatles. Now it's the bedspread.
- 51 A Grand Entrance**  
Home appeal is at your doorstep.
- 55 HOME Reflections**  
The days when people lived downtown.
- 60 Bathroom and Kitchen Conveniences**  
How come I didn't think of that?



COVER: See *Backyard Rinks*, pg.10. Photo: Pete Lawrence Photography



# HOME Front



Photo: Pete Lawrence Photography

"Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." Those words, written ninety years ago, still ring true, especially during the winter season. I'm hoping this issue of HOME finds you in your comfiest clothes, on the couch, enjoying your own personal space. You'll find lots in the following pages to inspire and entertain you!

Let's start by taking you outside onto that icon of our Canadian pastime, the backyard rink (p.10). Then let's walk around to the front yard, and specifically your sidewalk, to make sure you're "snow legal" (p.8). Time to go inside? What does your home's entrance say about you – and what could it say (p.51)?

Coming inside from the frosty cold, there's nothing like a fireplace to warm up a room – physically and aesthetically. No fireplace? You could change that (p.39).

Let's take a tour of your home. Our Winter Issue is a fun smorgasbord of interesting home ideas! Check out genius products for the bathroom and kitchen (p.60); and see how the British Invasion of music in the '60s is now mimicked by today's interior fashions (p.49). You'll also see colours in a whole new light, when you read about the top colours for Spring – and who decided what those colours should be (p.22).

More often than not, making home renovation or decoration decisions can be a bit daunting. Doing it yourself and doing it wrong can be disappointing at best, or downright dangerous and expensive at worst. Calling in professional help is the answer. Find out who does what, on p.34.

At HOME, we always love to bring you inside some of the more iconic residences in our city. This time, join us at one of Saskatoon's premiere new developments – the Luxe on Broadway (p.16).

If the Luxe isn't your style, then maybe "your style" is! See what we mean by touring a truly "Eclectic Home" (p.43).

We're always willing to try new story ideas, as long as they stay true to our mission – to make our readers feel more "at home" with where they live. Few things are as welcoming to a home as the smell of good food cooking, especially in winter. See what dishes we've got cooking for you on p.31!

We always end each issue with a reader favorite: a glimpse of Saskatoon's history. With so much talk of revival of our city centre, our HOMETOWN Reflections covers the history of residential living in Saskatoon's downtown (p.55).

I'll conclude now by wishing you all the very best of the winter season and its special celebrations. A sincere thank you to our Reader Panel, our advertisers and to you, our readers, for bringing HOME into your homes!

AMANDA SOULODRE  
PUBLISHER

*Got suggestions? Comments? Questions? Want to see back issues of HOME? Visit [saskatoon-home.ca](http://saskatoon-home.ca).*

# HOME

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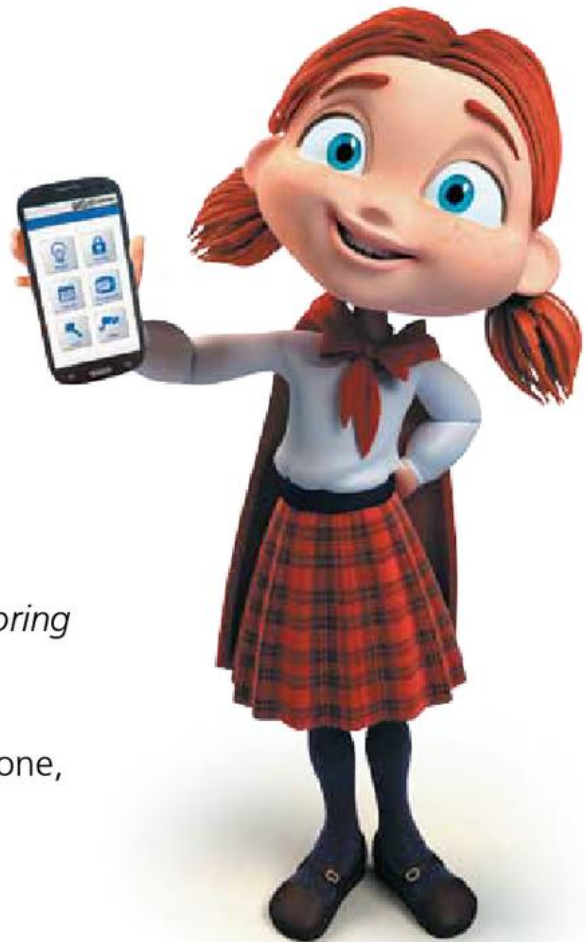
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# Our Reader Panel: For Your HOME!



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**Terry Kostyna**  
*President  
Northern Sky Developments Inc*

## Want to volunteer for the Spring 2013 Reader Panel?

Saskatoon HOME is proud to present our Winter 2012 Reader Panel – people from Saskatoon who helped us select the stories for this issue.

We are dedicated to Saskatoon content. There are lots of great things to write about – but which

subjects will most interest our readers? To help us make that decision, we first create a list of possible topics. We give them to our reader panel for their individual feedback and ranking, then compile the results to determine our final list.

You don't need any special skills to be on our panel, and the time required is minimal. The only qualification is your sincere opinion as a reader. Your single task will be to look at the story suggestions and rank them in order of your preference. 🏠

*If you would like more information on being on a future reader panel email [info@saskatoon-home.ca](mailto:info@saskatoon-home.ca) with the subject line 'Reader Panel'.*

*We look forward to your interest – and your opinion!*



*Wendy Perry*  
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## HOMEOWNERS AND THE LAW: SNOW REMOVAL

Once more the winter season is upon us. If you're wondering what exactly you need to do as a homeowner to keep snow clear and how you can reach the right people in the city for your questions and concerns about the roads, type in "Saskatoon Snow and Ice Program" into your favourite search engine and navigate from there. However, there are a few other details that you'll find out below.

The most important thing for homeowners to know is that sidewalks must be cleared in most parts of the city within 48 hours of a snowfall and within 24 hours in certain designated areas. If you are unsure whether you live in such an area, the city has a link to the bylaw on


the Sidewalk Snow Clearing subpage. In the latter half of the bylaw are diagrams of the designated areas.

If you have a grass boulevard between the sidewalk and the street, there is no requirement to keep the boulevard clear of snow, only the sidewalk, says Angela Gardiner, manager in the Transportation Branch of the city. Normally, you cannot put snow from the sidewalk into the street, but there is an exception. According to Gardiner, "If there is no room on the adjacent property, snow (but not other materials) may be put in the parking lane, but not travel lanes on a roadway." Lastly, homeowners with alleyways or back lanes are also resp-

onsible for clearing them. Says Pat Hyde, Manager of Public Works, "Where two properties are adjacent to a lane, the responsibility is equally shared."

The city maintains a hotline at (306) 975-2491 for a few common concerns. First, if neighbours are not clearing their sidewalks in the required time, the city will send a bylaw inspector to investigate after receiving a complaint. "Notice to clear the sidewalk will be issued," says Hyde. "If not complied with, the COS [City of Saskatoon] will clear the sidewalk and applicable charges will be added to the property taxes." Second, though city streets are not typically cleared, "if rutting occurs the length of

the block of 15 cm (6 inches) or more," says Hyde, "it will be investigated and a grader dispatched; if warranted." Call if you have concerns about icing at particular intersections; the city will send someone to investigate and sand as required.

If you require assistance clearing your sidewalks, the city advises you to obtain help from family, friends or neighbours. Non-profit groups that would like to help in this regard are asked to phone the above hotline if they would like to have their services promoted on the city's Sidewalk Snow Clearing webpage. 

*Jordan Jackson*



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# BACKYARD RINKS



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*The winters of my childhood were long, long seasons. We lived in three places – the school, the church, and the skating rink – but our real life was on the skating rink.*

- Roch Carrier, *The Hockey Sweater*

*Sometimes at night I can hear the ice crack  
It sounds like thunder and it rips through my back  
Sometimes in the morning I still hear the sound  
Ice meets metal...*

*Can't you drive me down to the Big League?*

- Tom Cochrane, *Big League*

---



JEFF O'BRIEN



PETE LAWRENCE





Left to right: Greg Matsalla, Dallan Norrish, Ryan Walchuk, Justin Matsalla, Randy Walchuk and goalie Mark Walchuk stop to pose for a photo mid-game in the converted barn, turned hockey rink.

Wayne Gretzky learned his craft on the one his father built, the base laid down with a lawn sprinkler, then flooded with a garden hose and left to freeze, layer by layer, into a smooth, hard surface. Generations of Canadian children have skated for the first time on one, carefully moving one foot in front of the other in awkward mimicry of their elders' effortless glides. They come in all shapes, sizes and configurations, from small patches of ice tucked away in a corner to grand edifices complete with boards, nets and lights. If you have enough money, there's a company in Ontario that will even sell you one equipped with the newest in artificial refrigeration technology. They're backyard skating rinks, and they're in your neighbourhood.

There are few things so intrinsically Canadian and so completely Saskatchewan as the simple act of lacing up a pair of skates and stepping out on to a sheet of ice. These are the memories we all share: the sound of skate blades and stick edges, the hollow boom of a puck

*"In the years before the Queen Elizabeth power plant was built, the river regularly froze solid, and there are stories of people skating all the way from Nutana to Beaver Creek and back. "*

against the boards, the taste of hot chocolate, shrieks of laughter or indignation, or the quiet touch of a special hand as you glide silently together under the stars. Whether it's out at a neighbourhood rink, down by the

Bessborough or in your own backyard, in Canada, winter and skating are synonymous.

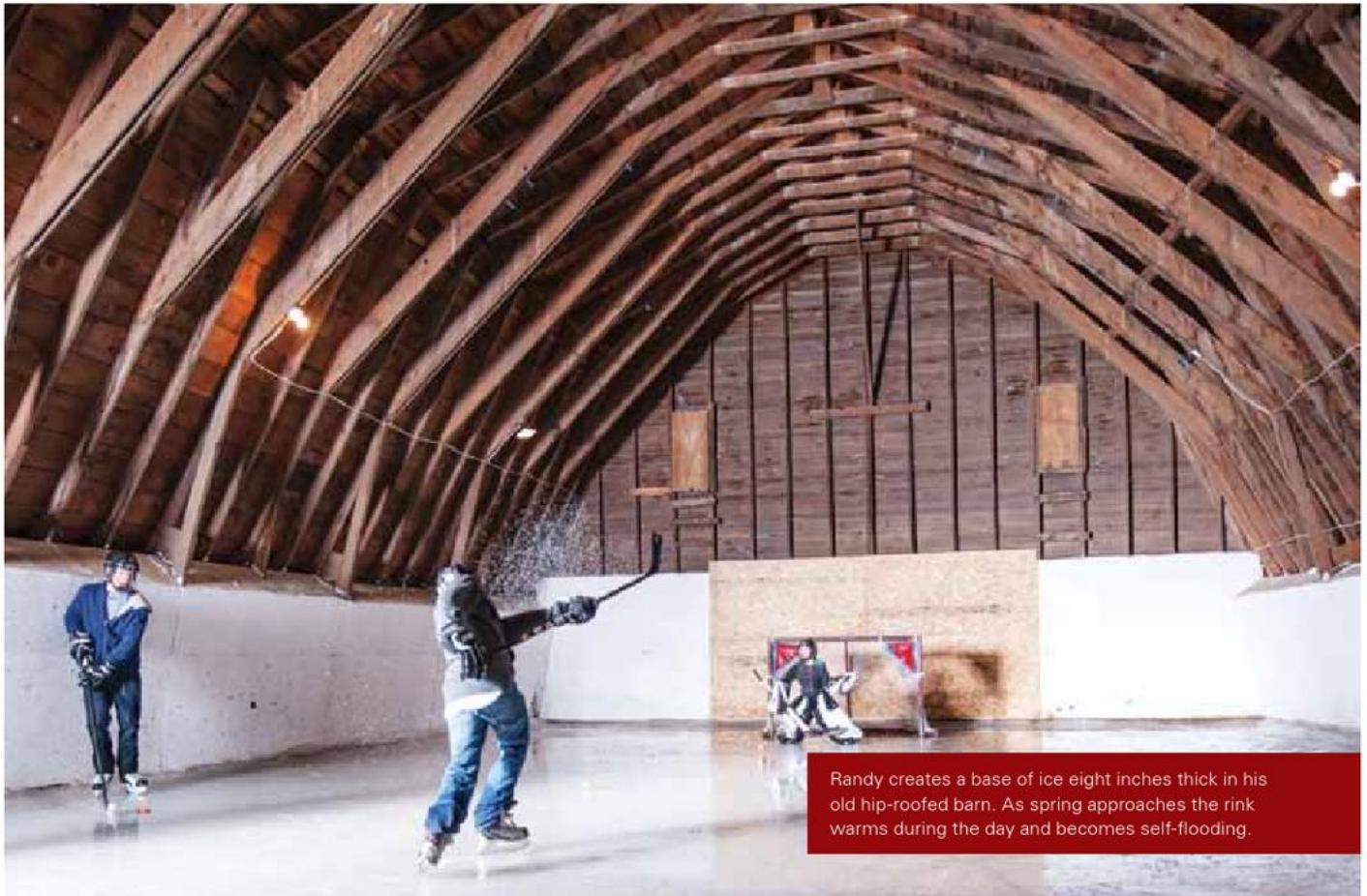
In the years before the Queen Elizabeth power plant was built, the river regularly froze solid, and there are stories of people skating all the way from Nutana to Beaver Creek and back.

The ubiquitous hockey arenas of today are for the most part a relatively new phenomenon, but we've always had outdoor rinks: in school yards, empty lots and local parks, and quite frequently in people's yards.

Backyard rinks take on the character of the builder. A great many, like Clint Harmon's home built version of the Montreal Forum, celebrate the sport of hockey. Clint's rink takes up nearly all of his Forest Grove backyard, and the boards (double-height behind the nets) are decorated with the logos of the Montreal Canadiens at one end ("we're big Habs fans here"), and the Minnesota Wild at the other, in recognition of the Saskatoon Wild minor hockey zone, of which Forest Grove forms a part.

The Harmons built their first rink six years ago so their sons could play hockey or skate at any time they wanted. "It was that or video games," he explains. "We decided from the start we didn't want the boys spending their time sitting





around playing video games. But as a parent, you have to give them some alternative." So he built them a rink.

The Harmons' rink starts going up in October. Clint lines the bottom with plastic, which has to be replaced every year. After that it's simply a matter of waiting until the days are cold enough to start flooding.

Ray Belhumeur's rink in Holiday Park is a more whimsical foray into the world of backyard – or in this case, front yard – ice sheets. After they had to dig up their yard to replace the sewer and water lines, they decided to plant a garden there for a few years while the ground settled. The Belhumeurs run a day care, and it was an easy decision to build a skating rink in

the winter time for the kids to play on. Surrounded by Christmas decorations, and softly lit by strings of lights along the fence, it's a skater's paradise. Brightly-coloured designs, painted onto the ice with a special ice paint, then flooded over, add a touch of fantasy to the scene. Last Christmas, his yard won an award from the Holiday Park Community Association.

The most ambitious of the backyard rinks we discovered was Randy Walchuk's converted barn.

Living on an acreage, Randy and his wife, Jodi, poured their first small rink when their oldest son was two, so he could learn to skate. When the boy was a little older, Randy built a fence around his wife's

vegetable garden. But when he started putting up lights, she demanded to know what he was doing to her garden. "This isn't a garden," he told her. "It's a skating rink!" And so it was – garden in the summer, hockey rink in the winter for the Walchuks and their three sons Kent, Ryan and Mark.

In 2005, they bought 20 acres of land west of their home which included an abandoned house and an old hip-roofed barn. They renovated the house for Jodi's parents to live in, then cleaned out the barn, which was jammed full of junk of every description. The plan was to use it for storage, but as he was finally sweeping it out after a long day of hauling stuff away, Randy turned to


his sons and said "I'll bet this would make a nice rink."

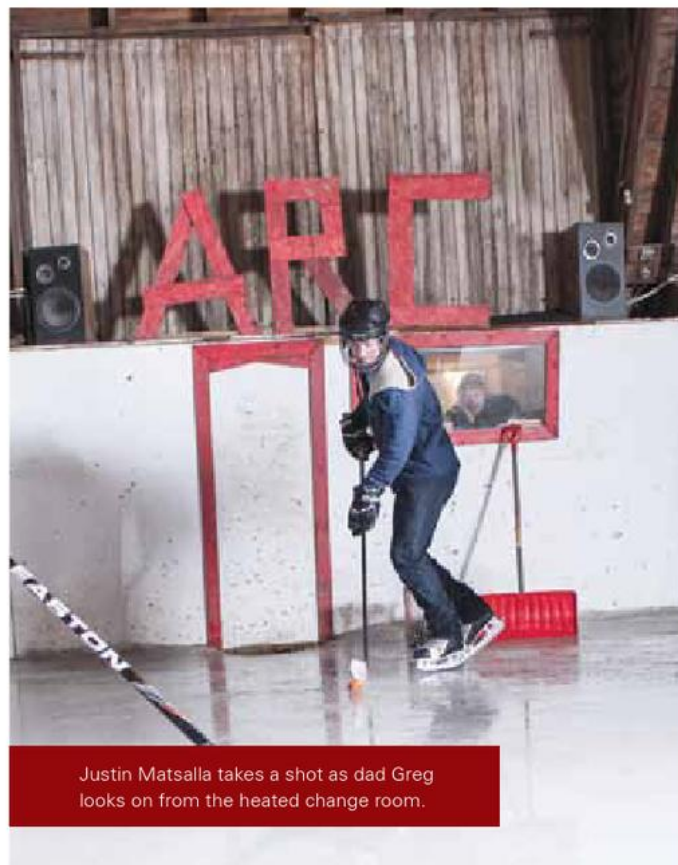
And so it did. They built the first rink there the next winter and have been going strong ever since. Being essentially an indoor rink, it is protected from the wind and doesn't require quite as much shovelling as the outdoor ones did ("except for what comes down through the missing shingles"). He ran electricity to it, built heated change rooms, added a lounge for parents and put in a "massive sound system" for his three sons, their friends and teammates, his neighbours and their children, and just about anyone else who comes by. "It's kind of a community rink in some ways," he says. The "Wall of Fame", which



visitors are encouraged to sign, now contains hundreds of signatures.

Randy starts with a sheet of plastic as a liner, then pours in "a couple thousand gallons of water", enough to make a pool four inches deep, then waits for it to freeze. After that, he re-floods the ice periodically, depending on how heavily it is being used. By the end of winter, his ice will be eight inches thick. As spring approaches, it can get quite warm inside during the day, and the rink becomes self-flooding, with a film of water forming on top, then re-freezing into a smooth surface each night. Last year it wasn't cold enough to start pouring until the end of November, but he had ice until almost the end of April.

Everyone we talked to uses a plastic liner in some kind of frame to make their ice. If you search the internet, you'll find all sorts of do-it-yourself backyard rink kits for sale, but lumber and a roll of heavy poly or a large tarp will do the trick just as well. Purists may want to go the Walter Gretzky route, starting with a lawn-sprinkler on the grass to make a base, then building it up over several nights with a garden hose. This can take considerably longer, but you don't need to put down plastic or build a frame for it. Either way, there are resources a-plenty, at the library or on the internet, to help the would-be rink builder create his or her own little (or not-so-little) backyard arena. 



Justin Matsalla takes a shot as dad Greg looks on from the heated change room.

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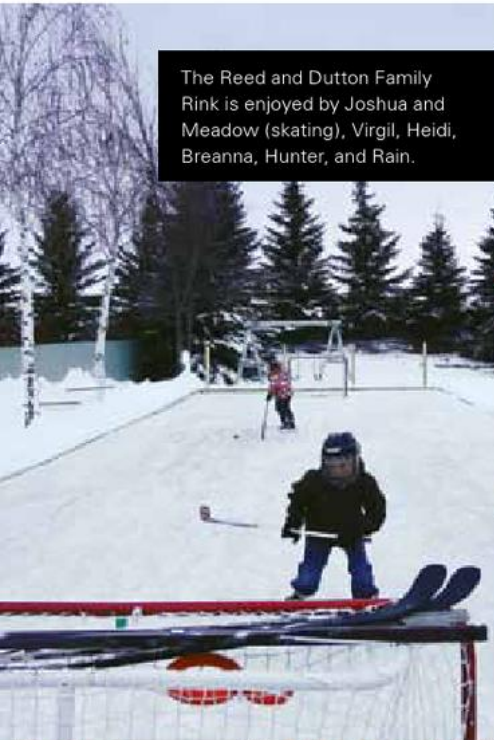
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# BACKYARD RINKS OF SASKATOON

You shot! You scored! A big thank you to all of our readers who sent us photos of their backyard rinks. We were overwhelmed – literally – by the response. To all those with frosty wet hands and frozen toes, standing out there late at night for the love of their children, and love of the game, we salute you!

The Reed and Dutton Family Rink is enjoyed by Joshua and Meadow (skating), Virgil, Heidi, Breanna, Hunter, and Rain.

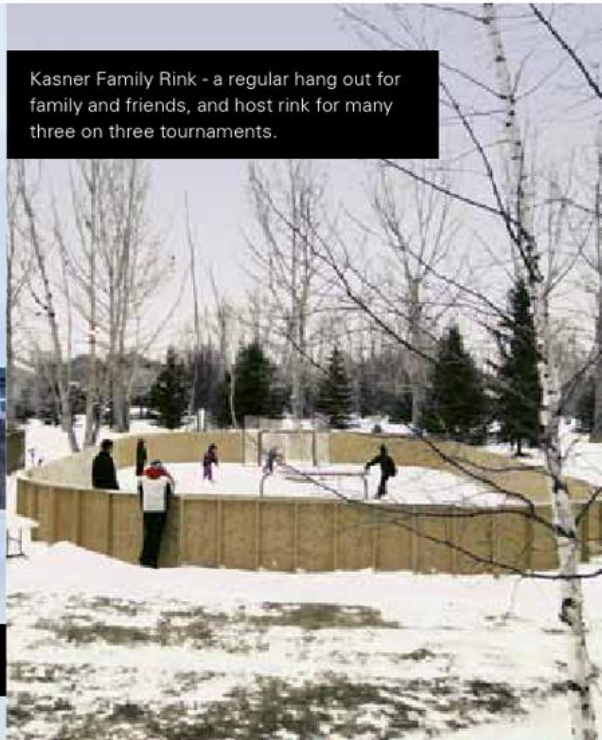


FARMHO community

Julia taking a slap shot at the Soulodre Family Rink.



Kasner Family Rink - a regular hang out for family and friends, and host rink for many three on three tournaments.



Harmon Family Rink







Gabruch Family Rink

All of Sebastian Soulodre's friends from day care are enjoying the rink he and his dad made together.



Berger Family Rink



Belhumeur Family Rink



Belhumeur Family Rink

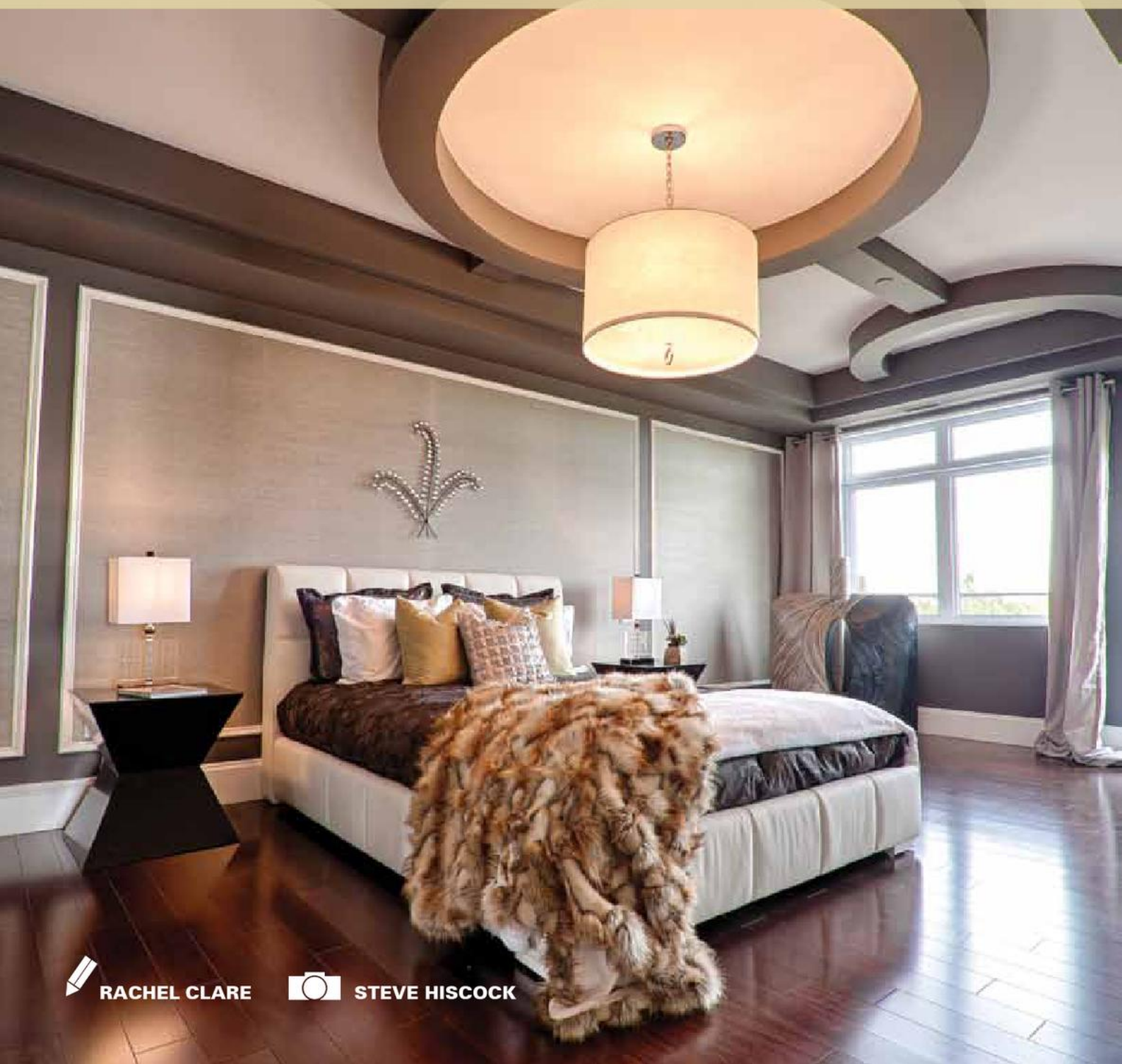


Harmon Family Rink

For even more photos, visit us at [www.saskatoon-home.ca/extras.htm](http://www.saskatoon-home.ca/extras.htm)



# LIVING IN LUXE-URY



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LUXE is a one-of-a-kind development in Saskatoon: a luxury boutique style building marketed to those who desire elite condominium living. Rather than creating a few extravagant penthouses in an otherwise average building, Meridian Development chose to make every suite an oasis of luxury. The smallest of the 24 units is a roomy 1,400 square feet, and the largest of the six penthouses is a massive 2,400 square feet.

Colleen Wilson, Director of Design for Meridian Development, traveled North America in search of prestigious condo buildings to serve as inspiration for the designs at LUXE. She was particularly impressed by the Trump Tower in Chicago, with its fantastic common spaces and meticulous attention to

high-end details. She states that the LUXE suites rival the finest condominiums she has seen, and in particular the Sky Estates look and feel like elegant New York condominiums.

Those buying high-end condominiums tend to want to be involved in the decorating process. As a result, each suite is unique in style. Karl Miller with Meridian Development states that the standard finishes in one of the main condominiums would be considered an upgrade package anywhere else in Saskatoon. The sixth floor Sky Penthouses are further upgraded while the height of luxury penthouse living can be found in one of the three spacious seventh floor Sky Estates. Each penthouse is unique, but examples of high-end finishing touches include

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grasscloth wall paper, travertine flooring, granite countertops and premium stainless steel appliances. Bathrooms have a spa-like feel with hand-set tile, designer faucets and vessel sinks. Contemporary electric/gas fireplaces add warmth to spacious common spaces designed to accommodate large gatherings. A wet bar with additional storage adds to the ease of entertaining. Premier businesses in Sask-

atoon were involved in some of the condo decor, including the prestigious Atmosphere Interior Design.

Each penthouse reflects the individuality of the owner. For example, one Sky Estate designed for a bachelor has a modern, masculine feel. Rich charcoal, browns and greys are incorporated into the design, but the look is softened with a mosaic glass backsplash in the







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kitchen and a crocodile leather upholstered headboard in the bedroom.

The Sky Estates offer soaring twelve foot high ceilings. Oversized wrap-around transom windows allow bright natural light that is complemented by designer lighting fixtures throughout the unit. Broadway is one of the higher points in Saskatoon, and residents are treated to a vista of Saskatoon's urban forest. Two of the Sky Estates have three balconies with glass railings that, at 20 feet long and 6 feet wide, feel more like terraces.

In addition to the beauty above, there is practicality below. Safety of the residents is taken seriously and a biometric entry reads the fingerprint of homeowners before allowing access. Each Sky Estate includes two underground parking stalls as well as a storage unit. **197**



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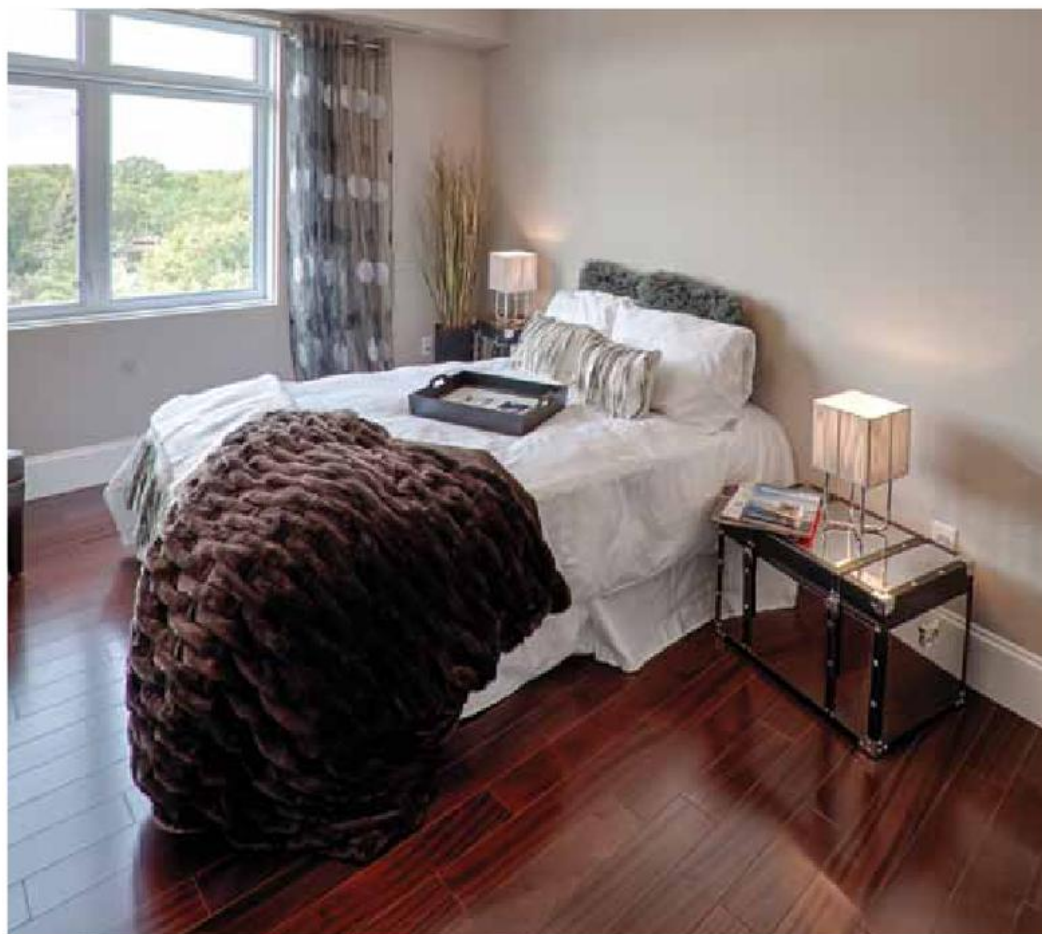




Many condo buildings in Saskatoon are wood construction, but LUXE is a steel and concrete hybrid, which means fewer problems with noise and fewer worries with fire. Sound attenuation (the scattering and absorption of sound) was an integral part of the building construction.

Although the floor plan, style and design of each penthouse is different, all feature energy efficient, low-impact elements. Motion sensors for lighting, low flow faucets, Energy Star appliances and dual pane windows are only a few of the factors that make the LUXE an Eco-3000 building.

Gorgeous views of Broadway, spacious balconies, welcoming entertaining spaces and superior amenities are just some of the perks that those lucky enough to live in the LUXE penthouses are able to enjoy. 





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# COLOUR FORECASTING

NOT AS SIMPLE AS 'WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE?'







KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

*Serious research and 'clue collection' determine the next hot hue.*

It's official. We now know what 2013 will look like. So get ready to freshen up your wardrobe, your table, your throw pillows. Guess what? That scarf you absolutely loved that was relegated to the back of the closet when that colour was 'out'? It may well be back on the 'must wear' list because of colour forecasting.

The colours of things you see every day – in the clothes you wear, your walls, your draperies, your furnishings, your car, even the coffee cup you cradle over breakfast – are all intentional. Of course they are, you say. Everything has to be some colour or another. But the selection isn't a random, grab a crayon from the box sort of approach. Researchers, psychologists, colour consultants, graphic artists, fashion designers, decorators, and marketers all join forces, and myriad steps go into the culmination: the colour you ultimately see. In fact, there's a pretty high probability you bought that thing because of its colour.


Pantone LLC, considered a colour "global authority," is a provider of professional colour standards for design industries. Each year, countless products and services are sold by Pantone in over 100 countries in the graphic arts, fashion, home, interior, plastics, architectural, paint, industrial design and consumer markets. This fall during New York Fashion

Week, the company unveiled the Pantone Fashion Color Report Spring 2013, a comprehensive overview of designers' use of colour in their upcoming collections.

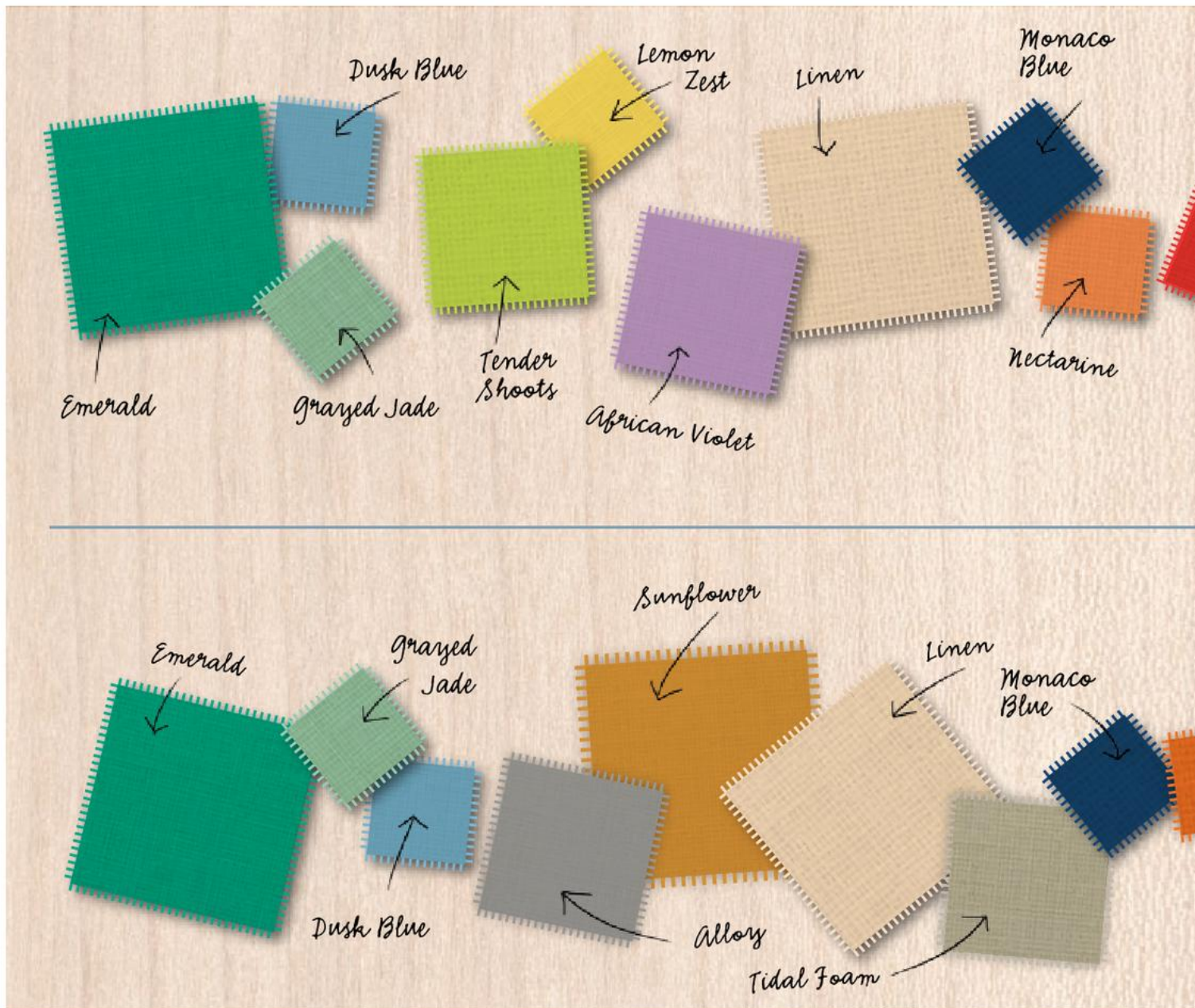
The fashion palette will offer a "balance between light and bright, classic and new" and "emphasizes this need for balance, while at the same time allowing for individuality, self-expression and excitement."

Pantone also recently announced its 2013 Color Inspiration and Direction for Home Furnishings and Interior Design. "To create the 'magic' that ultimately leads to sales in the marketplace, colours for 2013 will need to coax and cajole, soothe or astonish, renew and replenish. At the same time, there will be the consumer's expectation of practicality – what colours will have staying power and can be relied upon as a steadying influence in unsteady times."

Yeah, but what does that look like? Those media release quotes might be a bit hard to visualize, but the woman asserting them is no bland beige lightweight. Leatrice (Lee) Eiseman heads up the Eiseman Center for Color Information and Training in Seattle, and is the executive director of the Pantone Color Institute®. She's a sought-after speaker, writer and colour expert, and is the author of eight books on colour, many award winners. This woman knows her crayons.

Lee spoke with Saskatoon HOME recently about colour forecasting, the psychology of colour, and how 'pretty' can be so complex. Turns out, some of it is pretty pragmatic. 





"There is a dynamic that occurs when something new appears in the marketplace," says Lee. "Something tweaks the eye, catches your attention, makes you interested in purchasing. Quite frankly, colour keeps the wheels of commerce greased. The reason for forecasting services is to give producers, designers, and consumers a leg up on where colour direction is going, what they can expect

to see in the future. There's a reason beyond 'let's just redo some colours and

chips on the wall and throw darts to see what we will forecast for the coming year."

*"We know how riveting colour can be, and often it's subliminal. You can walk into a store, see an item on a shelf and it reawakens something, perhaps even long forgotten in your mind."*

surprise everybody." What they don't do, Lee chuckles, is "pin a bunch of Pantone

In fact, research has shown that an average of 60 per cent of purchase

or 'I want that' decisions are made based on colour. The visual, like the sense of smell, can conjure up a purchase trigger and so the intelligent use of it is sought by producers who want you to buy their kitchen appliances, watch their movies, buy their travel vacations, or buy their clothing lines.

"We know how riveting colour can be, and often it's subliminal. You can walk





into a store, see an item on a shelf and it reawakens something, perhaps even long forgotten in your mind," explains Lee. "There is a natural proclivity for the hand to reach out, pick it up, consider it. Other people may be a bit more intentional. You have eight placemats of a particular colour and you want to freshen that up. You plan to go out and buy candles and napkins." You consider

elements like quality and price, but the colour carrot dangles.

"In today's economy," says Lee, "people carefully consider what they spend money on. I think it's particularly arrogant for a colour consultant to walk into someone's home and say you have to get rid of that because it's so yesterday. You have to find out what meaning those things have, why they want that

## Braid Flooring & Window Fashions enthusiastically welcomes Michelle Rowlett to our team!



Top left: Michelle Rowlett, IDT, DID - Interior Design Consultant. Top right and bottom: Michelle with her design team, Sherry Volk and Crys Peterson.

Michelle brings tremendous knowledge and experience to the Braid team. With the color forecast complete, come visit Michelle and see how you can add elements of these colours into your home.

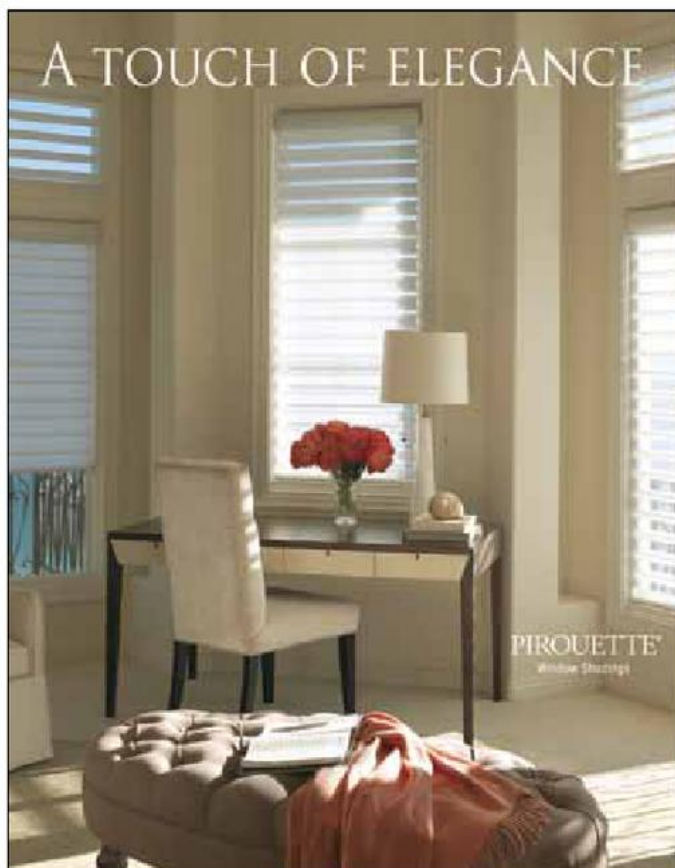


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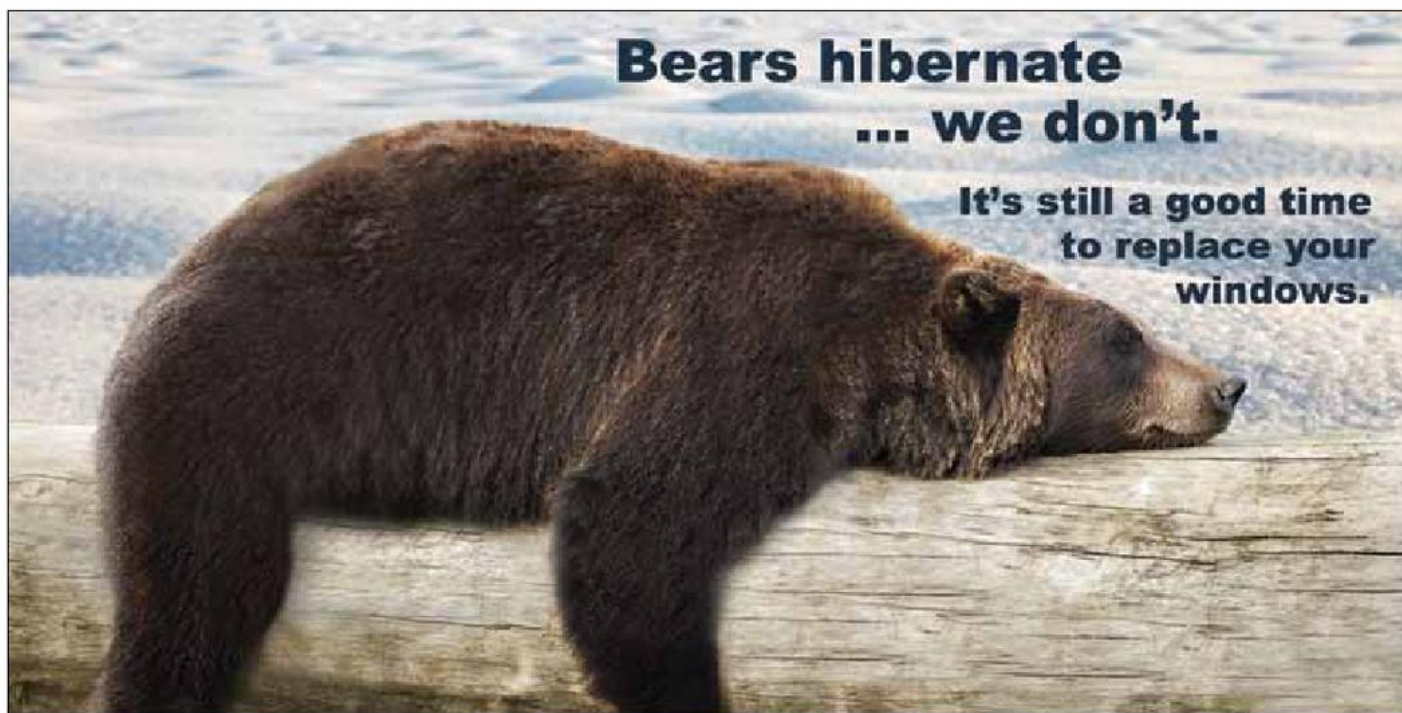
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I do a lot of research online, consult with colleagues, a lot of areas I can look at will tell me that orange, for instance, is gaining momentum." Cyclical patterns suggest that if a colour has not been popular for awhile, and its usage has subsided, it could very well be that its time has come to regain some attention.

Lee likens colour knowledge to playing the piano; not everyone will be a concert pianist, but you can learn, you get better at appreciating what you see and why. Check out Pantone's colour forecast for what might appeal to you.

"We all do this, especially if you're in the midst of redecorating or adding

*Lee likens colour knowledge to playing the piano; not everyone will be a concert pianist, but you can learn, you get better at appreciating what you see and why.*

"You also look at other indicators. Is there going to be a big sports event? Where and what are the colours indigenous to that country? Is there a traveling art exhibit that is going around the world that might influence trends? Who is the artist? Do they have a particular colour signature? Is there a new big film coming out that has particular colours associated with it? So," she explains, "you put all these clues together and come up with a colour forecast."

to your wardrobe," Lee says. "We tear out pages from magazines, we collect paint swatches, and we have a drawer with all our 'oh I love that' stuff in it. There's usually a pattern that emerges. If you pay attention, that will take you well down the road." Yellow brick, perhaps. 

*See the Spring 2013 issue of Saskatoon HOME for the reveal of the 'it' colour of the year, selected by Pantone.*

particular colour in their home. I would applaud that," she explains, "and what I would say is let's play with it a little bit and make it look new."

Pantone chose Tangerine Tango as Color of the Year for 2012, but that just

didn't get pulled out of the boardroom air.

"What we did before we ever got to that point is a lot of research and homework throughout the world," she says "I travel quite a bit and I look for clues to see what is rising in popularity.



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## HOME Food: THE STORY OF A WINTER STEW

Winter is again upon us, and there's no better way to warm your soul after venturing out into the cold than a hearty winter meal with friends or family. I'm not an expert chef by any means, but as a food writer and critic, I feel it is my responsibility to try making different menus, experimenting with unfamiliar techniques, in order to understand how hard it can be for the real chefs. So a 'gourmet night' is something that my wife Jenny and I do with some measure of frequency. In this case, we decided to invite some friends over to join us while we created a winter dinner menu.

Whenever we do one of these meals, we want to use as many proper ingredients

as possible, so no processed or frozen, chemical-laden TV dinner fare (in other words, we use real food). I also try to use as many local ingredients and products as possible, so that we can go the shortest distance from farm to plate. And lastly, more than once when it was just me cooking for

*The perfect partner-in-crime to a good stew is a simple homemade biscuit. It's so easy and quick to make them from scratch. They're light, fresh, and buttery – perfect for sopping up that bacon-infused jus.*

Jenny, I've bitten off more than I could chew, pushing dinnertime to ten at night. I wanted to do something simple, so I could prep as much in advance and spend time with my dinner guests.

The menu I decided on was a hearty beef, bacon, and sweet potato winter stew, with farm fresh vegetables. I'm also a sucker for fresh homemade biscuits, made from scratch, so I used an old recipe from my wife's side of the family. And to accompany those components, a straight-

forward arugula and shaved Parmesan salad with lemon and olive oil.

Sticking to our local theme, we started the evening with some amazing beer from Paddock Wood, a

local brewery. Of course, we had to have the Winter Ale, and since I like a blonder beer, I opted for the fruity and delicious Sine Domine. In addition to beer and red wine, we also served some gin and tonics, using Gambit Gin from local distiller Lucky Bastard, mixed with Fentimen's Tonic. This combination of local gin and the amazing tonic makes for a drink that tastes so good you could easily charge \$15.00 in an upscale lounge setting.

Historically, stew has been around since ancient times; people have been writing about it since at least 8th century BC and archeological evidence of its existence dates back more than 8000 years. There are recipes for stews in the



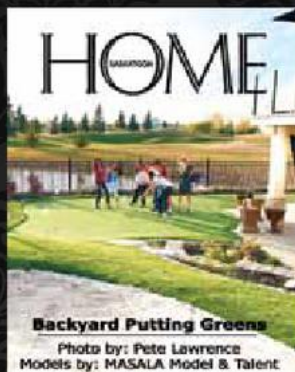
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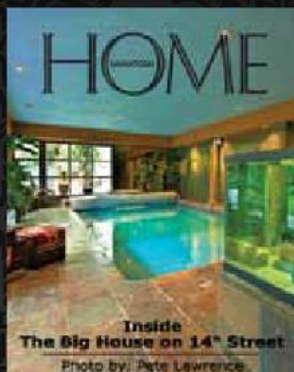
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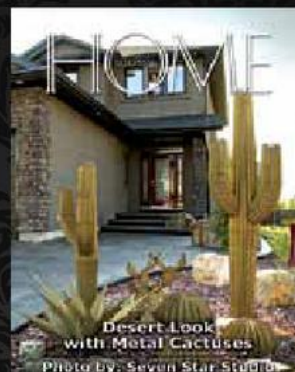
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famed Roman cookbook, Apicius, believed to date from the 4th Century AD. Le Viandier, one of the oldest cookbooks in France, has a plethora of ragouts and stews within its pages. So it's safe to say that human beings have been making variations of this hearty meal for centuries.

My stew actually turned out better than I expected. Thankfully, I was the only food critic there to cover the story, so you'll have to take my word for it. I've also taken the liberty of swearing any witnesses to secrecy about whether or not there were any major explosions in the kitchen.

Because I find potatoes boring, I opted for sweet potatoes, which gave the stew a bit more flavour and a lovely colour. We bought fresh herbs and vegetables from the farmer's market, which added a bright, garden-worthy flavour. The beef itself was from Pine View Farms All Natural Meats, cooked in the slow cooker for about 8 hours, which made it really tender. But the hero of the dish was the bacon (duh), also from Pine View Farms. It infused an amazing flavour into the broth that was still subtle enough to allow to the rest of the ingredients to breathe. 



#### Ma Cushon's Homemade Biscuits

5 cups flour  
10 tsp. baking powder  
2 tsp. salt  
1 cup lard  
2 ¼ cups of milk  
2 tbsp. of melted butter

##### Directions:

*Pre-heat oven to 425 degrees C. Mix flour, baking powder, milk, and salt in a bowl. Add lard, crushing with a fork until it is in pea-sized chunks in the mix. Knead ingredients together in bowl. Sprinkle a little flour on the counter, and place your dough on flour. Cut shapes with a drinking glass and place on baking tray. Bake in oven for 10 to 12 minutes, until golden brown. Brush with melted butter.*

#### Craig's Hearty Beef, Bacon, & Sweet Potato Winter Stew (Serves 6)

2 ¼ lbs. of beef, cut into 1 inch pieces  
2 large sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into 2 inch pieces  
6 slices of bacon, chopped into healthy pieces  
1 ½ large onion, sliced thick  
1 carrot, sliced  
21 ounces beef broth  
1 ½ tsp. salt  
1 ½ pinches black pepper  
1 ½ tsp. fresh, chopped thyme  
1 ½ tsp. fresh, chopped oregano  
3 tbsp cornstarch  
3 tbsp water

##### Directions:

*Start in the late morning, prepping your ingredients. Allow 8 hours cooking time. Coat crock pot with splash of oil. Place all ingredients (except water and cornstarch) in crock pot. Mix well. Cook on low for 7 to 8 hours. 15 minutes before serving, mix water and cornstarch into crock pot with the rest of the ingredients. Cover and cook until broth thickens. Serve with fresh biscuits and enjoy! Bask in glory of your own amazingness while guests compliment you.*



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The perfect partner-in-crime to a good stew is a simple homemade biscuit. It's so easy and quick to make them from scratch. They're light, fresh, and buttery – perfect for sopping up that bacon-infused jus.

With stew and biscuits being pretty hearty and a good meat and starch balance, a nice, light salad fit right in. It was deceptively simple; arugula leaves with some fresh squeezed lemon and oil drizzled on top, and slices of fresh shaved Parmesan.


For dessert, we enjoyed some artisan cupcakes from The Farmer's Market. I can't take credit for these, but they were light and delicious, a sweet little bite.

All in all, the night went off amazingly. And admittedly, it doesn't always








happen when I experiment with new cooking techniques on our gourmet nights. Sometimes one dish is stellar, but another is botched in the execution – an overdone piece of duck or a sauce that doesn't taste quite right. However, it is through these mistakes that actual chefs learn the intricacies of cooking, something I'd urge everyone to try. It's fun and it can be a real family (or friendly) activity, especially on a cold winter night in. Bellies filled with beer and stew, my guests that evening were happy, which is the ultimate aim for any good host. And for a few hours, the cold outside was forgotten, in favour of friendship, breaking bread, and soul-warming bacon. 

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KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

## WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

### WHO DOES WHAT WHEN YOU NEED TO BUILD, ADD ON OR RENOVATE

Never mind tinker, tailor, soldier, spy. When you're embarking on a big home renovation, addition or a new build – all certainly stressful and potentially pricey projects – how do you determine whom you need for what job? An architect or an architectural technologist? A builder or a contractor? An interior designer or interior decorator? Many hands may make light work, but how do you make sure you're paying for what you need and getting what you pay for?

It's clear that the capabilities, credentials and experience of various professionals who can be hired for a particular project are varied. Determining who you need may be complicated, and it doesn't help

that opinions vary among the professions as to who is qualified to do what. Regardless, much of what a particular professional might do depends on the type and size of project.

The National Building Code of Canada (NBC) addresses the "design and construction of new buildings and the substantial renovation of existing buildings." There are nine parts to the Code, all to outline the "minimum provisions acceptable to maintain the safety of buildings, with specific regard to public health, fire protection, accessibility and structural sufficiency." You don't want to overspend, but you want the job done right.

Architectural technologist Sherry Bentley owns

Country by Design and produces plans for custom homes, additions and renovations. She received her Residential House Design Certification in B.C. The most common question she's asked is "Who do I need?"

"Most residential houses fall under Part 9 of the National Building Code (NBC), so for anything structural – roof, additions, major renovations – new house plans all have to be designed and drawn to NBC standards. The one big thing I tell everybody is also look for experience. I do get calls from people asking about draperies and paint colours; I tell them they have a choice. I can do that, but an interior designer or decorator may be better for that purpose."

There are overlaps in the work of professionals who may be hired to work on a home build or renovation. An interior designer might also do some décor work. A general contractor might also wield a hammer alongside the builder, especially if the company is small. An architect has much more specialized education than a draftsman, but both are quite capable of drawing up house plans.

"It's no wonder people get confused," Sherry says. "There's such a range of people who can be involved from architects all the way down to your sister-in-law who's got an eye for colour and sets herself up as a design consultant. You need to check qualifications," Sherry cautions.



Tamara Bowman is the creative director, lead designer and owner of Metric Interior Design, Inc. in Saskatoon. The store carries industry product samples as well as Metric's own custom and specialty products from worldwide suppliers. As an interior designer, Tamara helps people sort through what and whom they need on a given project.

"There's definitely some grey area between designers and decorators, and with other professions, too" says Tamara. "As designers, we're very knowledgeable in product design and function, acoustics and lighting. We straddle the whole process right from those initial plans through to the completion. When people come to us, we show them what we can offer

and we can also hook them up with an architect or a draftsman," she explains. "It can be very difficult to see what you need to make a project happen, so we can provide that guidance."

Cara Delong, design associate at Metric, says they often help customers sort out who they need and hopefully save them from costly mistakes.

"Sometimes we'll talk to people who have sort of gone overboard and hired an architect when that really wasn't necessary," Cara says. "Others haven't really gone far enough and thought they needed a decorator when what they really needed was an interior designer to help them plan their space." She describes a scenario where a man had been in a





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car accident and now uses a wheelchair. He needed some adjustments to his home and assumed he'd need an architect. "What he really needed was an interior designer to help him work out how he will best live and function in that space."

Sherry works with an engineer who helps her with any structural elements that are beyond her scope of practice with the NBC. "Many additions and renovations also require a preliminary review by an engineer to establish the structural ability of the building to have the work done to meet the client's requirements," she explains. "This is especially true of

old buildings that do not have structural drawings available and foundation supports are unknown."

Sherry, Tamara and Cara all advise people to

the project you have in mind so your needs become clear. Obviously, the best time to ask questions and do the research is before you start. Some professions

professional organizations before they can claim the title. Others do not. Ask around.

"I can't stress enough how important references are," insists Sherry. "A draftsman who's just come out of school might not be the best person to draw up your \$600,000 house." She cites the plight of a couple who found themselves with completed plans that featured a powder room right in between the kitchen and dining room. "That's a faux pas deluxe!" Sherry says. "You need to pay attention to little alarm bells; if you talk to a 'designer' who works on the side, or if they're not busy and make big promises, you should be leery. There's

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*Sherry, Tamara and Cara all advise people to ask specific questions about who does what. Provide detailed information about the project you have in mind so your needs become clear. Obviously, the best time to ask questions and do the research is before you start.*

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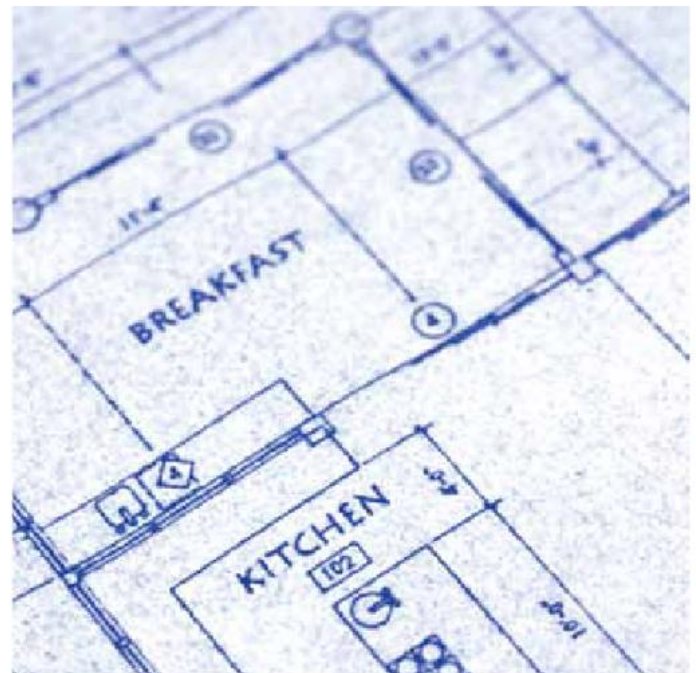
enough work out there so if someone is good, they should be busy!"

Sometimes people who pay for plans might feel it's too late to do things differently. Tamara says even though people feel they've done the work already, a second look is always a good idea "just to make sure those plans are suited for how you want to live in that space."

"That's what our training involves," she adds. "We can make recommendations for a change in lighting because you want to cook here or read over there. A drafts person doesn't always think of that livability aspect."

Whether you're planning a new build, an addition or a renovation to existing space, a vision of what the structure will ultimately look

and function like needs to be boiled down to actual plans and specifications so that vision can actually be built. Most professionals agree there can be an overlap of talents and skills, depending on education and training, certification, licensing, and experience. It's really up to the person doing the hiring to determine what professional best suits their needs and budget. **H**



Want to know more? Visit [saskatoon-home.ca/extras.htm](http://saskatoon-home.ca/extras.htm) for detailed descriptions of each of the professions.



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## FIREPLACES

 TAMMY ROBERT

Nothing captures your attention in a room like the warm glow and elegance of a fireplace. It is the focal point of any space, where your family and guests will naturally gravitate for everything from a glass of wine on a chilly night to posing for that iconic fireplace portrait. Regardless of the scenario, there is no end to the selection of fireplaces to meet your heating needs while enhancing space and decor.

If you're thinking about adding a fireplace to your home, or refurbishing your existing hearth, there are plenty of things to think about while still in the planning stages. Do you have a preference for gas, wood-burning or electric? Are you interested in a fireplace for esthetic purposes, to heat your home, or a combination of both? Some fireplaces look incredible but are designed and built to heat a very small space, while others are powerful and efficient enough to heat your whole home.

"A fireplace is not just an appliance – it's a piece of furniture," says Martin Schweighardt, manager of Saskatoon's Northern Fireplace. "In fact, if you think back as far as humans have been dwelling in spaces together, the fireplace is probably the first and most original piece of furniture."

Today a fireplace is not only a piece of furniture, it's an investment in your home. "It's something you're going to be living with for at least 15 - 20 years," says Martin. "We advise our clients 







they're generally adding a minimum of \$6000 - \$8000 to the value of their home."

### Wood Burning

The classic, traditional wood-burning fireplace evokes the senses – the sounds of crackling logs and the smells of freshly cut wood or earthy wood smoke.

"You'll never see the same flame twice," says Bob Perry, manager of Saskatoon's Wheatland Fireplace. "Today's energy efficient fireplaces have reduced emissions to a point that the smoke is consumed by the fire, causing the flames to almost appear to be floating. It's mesmerizing."

"Wood burning fireplaces really bring the romance," comments Martin. "We're selling record numbers of free-standing wood stoves, which are also really easy to introduce to your home. There's no hearth, simply a stovepipe going up and out." If you're fortunate enough to live in an older home with an original fireplace, and want to keep the original masonry of the hearth and chimney wall, there are also plenty of options for you to purchase and install or refurbish that incredible focal point of your home.

With low ash and relatively simple maintenance

and cleaning requirements, wood burning fireplaces are perfect for bringing into your home the sights and smells of the outdoors. Wood burning fireplaces are also very energy efficient, can lower your heating bills and can produce incredible amounts of heat; some are constructed to heat the entire house. There's a practical benefit to wood heat as well: with no power requirements, you're guaranteed to stay cozy warm, even if the electricity goes out for long periods of time.

### Gas Burning

A sophisticated, contemporary gas burning fireplace, insert or stove is designed to look like wood burning fireplaces; in fact, it's often impossible to tell the difference. "Gas burning fireplaces are airtight and convenient," says Martin. "All you have to do is flick a switch and your fire is roaring. They're priced to fit any budget and can be sized to fit virtually any space, with an endless number of choices of styles in glass, stonework and metals." Multi-sided gas-burning units, often seen in brand new homes as a central focal point dividing the kitchen from the living room, are also growing in popularity with sophisticated developers.

Aesthetically they are high in value, but gas burning fireplaces can also save you money. Turn down the furnace and use your gas fireplace to heat the living room as a zone heater and reduce your bills.

"Gas fireplaces don't require power," says Bob. "It's a totally different kind of heat than a wood-burning fire – more intense, great for centralized spaces. Plus gas burning fireplaces are a great source of backup heat; your pipes will never freeze if the power goes out."

### Electric

"Electric fireplaces are a fabulous, easy and convenient option," says Martin. "No venting is required. You can move it around the room, or across the country if you're relocating." Electric fireplaces can be freestanding, or lightweight and slender enough to be wall mounted, and tend to be less expensive than their gas or wood-burning counterparts.

Practically, they have their drawbacks. Electric fireplaces are not the most efficient way to heat a room. However, as an inexpensive but stylish decor piece without the commitment of venting, they can't be beat. Modern electric fireplaces look very realistic and are


as easy to install as plugging into a wall socket.

Martin also recommends being realistic about how much heat you need. "You don't want to oversize your fireplace," he advises. "You'll end up melting."

Once you've decided on the size and construction that meets your needs, you'll still have plenty of fun decisions to make with a wide variety of options for colors and compounds for the trims (the casing around your fireplace), fronts, and finishing for your fireplace.

Convinced? Fireplaces are perfect for almost any room of the home. The best place to start your shopping experience is at your local fireplace dealer's showroom.

"There are just so many traditional and contemporary styles to choose from today," says Bob. "You need to see the different fireplaces, turn them up and then down to their low point. It's such a major showpiece; it will never look the same in a brochure as it does right in front of you."

"You want to see it in action," says Martin. "You want to see it burn. Each fireplace has different flame patterns, which you'll see when they're side by side in a showroom. The only thing they all have in common is that they're all stunning." 



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# THE ECLECTIC DREAM HOME



Bruce Cowell's dream was to have his home in a park-like setting.



AVIVA ZACK



PETE LAWRENCE





An open floor plan, nine foot ceilings and lots of windows, give an airy feel to the main floor.

Dreams really do come true. That was certainly the case for Bruce Cowell, who in 2001 built his dream home on 80 acres just west of Saskatoon.

The journey to Bruce's eclectic dream home began way back when he was a child. Spending countless hours playing in city parks, he always wished he could live there. Today, his expansive landscaped property reminds him of those cherished park-like settings.

Drawn to the warmth and charm of character homes from past eras, Bruce and his wife Veronica initially wanted to find an old farm house to restore. After searching without success, however, they decided to recreate an arts & crafts style home from the ground up.

Armed with a pad of graph paper, pencil and several erasers, Bruce developed a workable 1 ½ story floor plan that integrated different styles of homes he had seen over his lifetime, including some that he had stayed in as a child.

The Cowells were fortunate enough to find Al Lozinski from Character Homes to help them with their vision. "He worked closely with us to reproduce the detail and feel of a century-old restored farm home," says Bruce.

Entering the Cowells' home is like stepping back in time. The long hallway and steep staircase remind Bruce of his grandparents' home, where he was always curious about what lurked upstairs.

The main floor is designed with a fairly open floor plan to allow easy conversation between areas. In keeping with the style of an arts & crafts home, wide arches were added to give some separation between spaces. French doors from the main entrance to the living room help create an intimate space for socializing, when the occasion demands.

Most areas on the main floor have open rafter construction, giving a ceiling height of almost ten feet. "This gives an open airy feel to these areas," says Bruce. The solid fir doors and window construction maintain the style of the home. "We used as many and as large windows as possible to take advantage of the outdoor scenery and

wildlife surrounding our house," adds Bruce.

For many years even prior to dreaming up their current home, the Cowells began collecting furniture and home décor from farm auctions and junk shops. One particular stand-out piece is their dark solid walnut dining set made in Canada in the 1940s and bought at a charity auction in Winnipeg. Peeking out nearby are black birds that Bruce found at the Western Development Museum's gift shop, and perfectly suited his love of nature and whimsical style.

The kitchen has a slightly different feel to other parts of the main floor. It is a nod to a funky '50s style diner where Bruce remembers spending many happy moments with his



dad. It includes bright countertops with a crushed ice look and chrome trim, stool seating and industrial lighting hanging from galvanized conduits.

A mudroom, essential in old farm homes to clean off the grime from farming, was included at their back entrance. Bruce converted a rustic washstand and basin into a functional sink that he uses frequently after tinkering in his workshop.

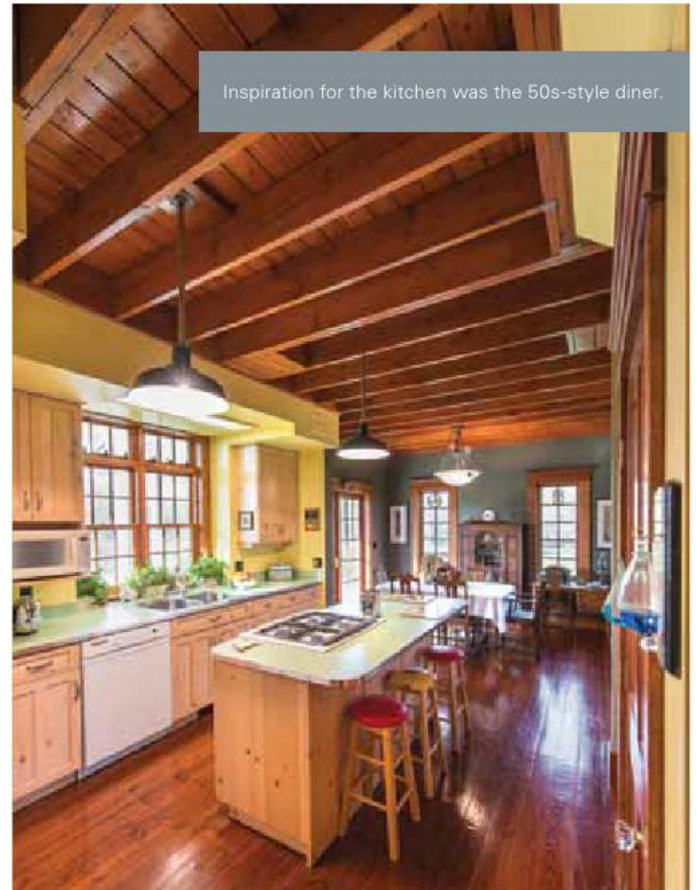
In keeping with the theme of an arts and crafts farm home, the Cowells decided to keep the property free of large garages and driveways. From the front of their expansive park-like property, there are no signs of cars, only what mimics wagon trails leading to their barn-like structure.

The building out back was built one year prior to the home, although with its

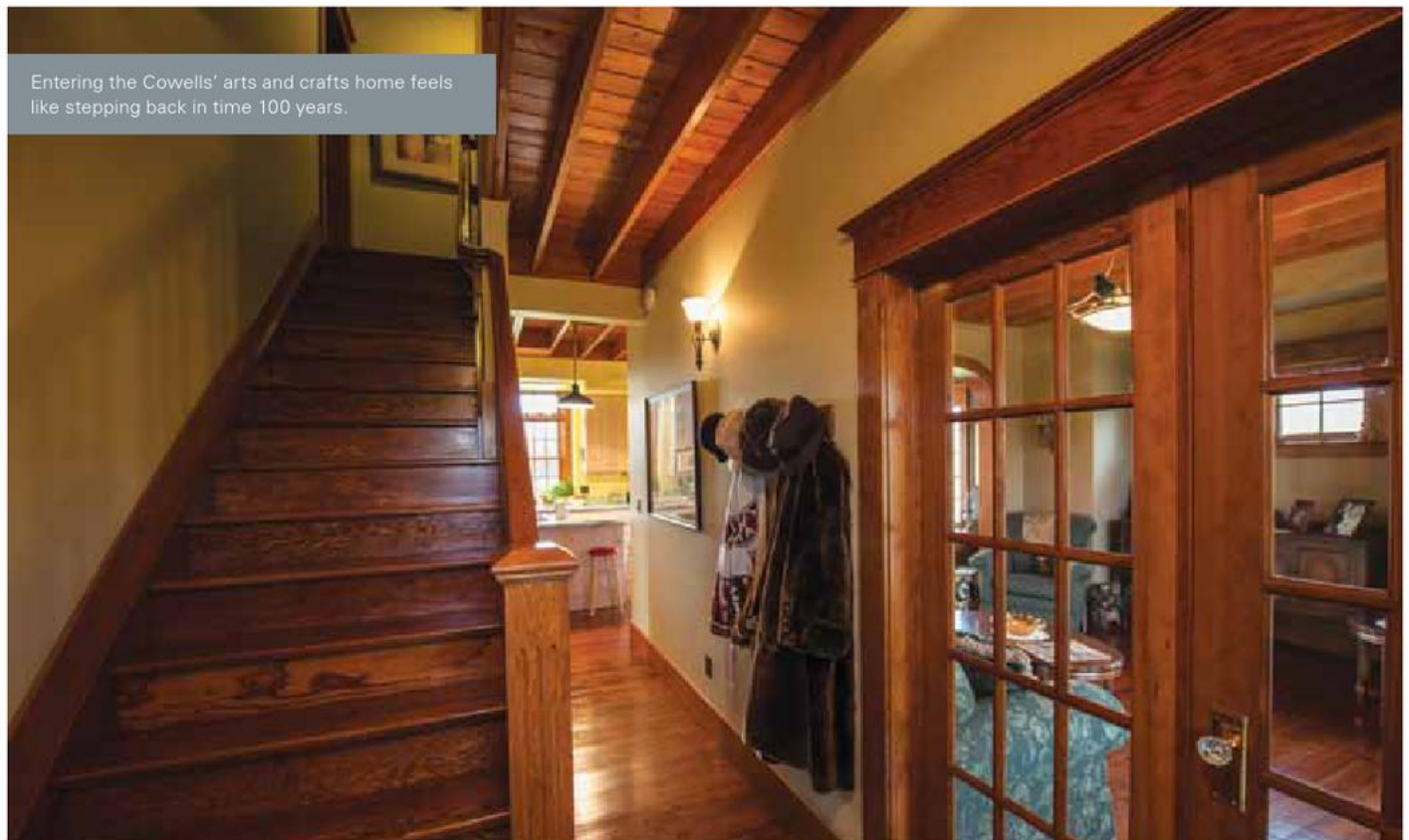
unfinished board and batten exterior, the elements have naturally aged it to look like a barn that has been there for decades – exactly the look Bruce was after. Inside is a multi-use space that houses a four car garage, a workshop, an office and a loft used as a billiards and music room.

Not one to overlook details, Bruce researched overhangs, and had his built to take the seasonal position of the sun into account. When the sun is high in the summer, their south-facing windows are shaded. During the winter months when the sun remains lower in the sky, the south-facing rooms take advantage of the natural warmth of the sun for most of the day.

To avoid the need for air conditioning and keep the home as energy-efficient as possible, the



Inspiration for the kitchen was the 50s-style diner.



Entering the Cowells' arts and crafts home feels like stepping back in time 100 years.





The modern master bedroom was a recent addition to the home with the aid of McMillan Works Contracting.

careful attention was spent on ensuring there would be proper cross-ventilation. Each area of the home has operational windows that allow movement of air at night from both east to west and north to south.

Hiring Neil McMillan from McMillan Works Contracting in 2011, the Cowells decided to add a large main floor master bedroom with ensuite and laundry. Not ones to bow to convention, Bruce and Veronica decided the master bedroom would have a completely separate theme from the rest of the house. The inspiration for this space came from their many travels to luxury hotel rooms, and they decided to create a pampering space that felt like an at-home spa.

Just as Al Lozinski had been the right fit to build their eclectic home years before, Bruce knew that Neil's family-run business was the right fit for this project. Neil appreciated Bruce's keen eye for detail and they were able to collaborate on the home's addition.

One challenge McMillan Works Contracting faced was in refinishing the exterior of the home once the addition inside was complete. It needed to be seamless from both inside and outside the home, and to look as if it was part of the original build.

Bruce couldn't be more pleased with the final result. He credits both Character Homes and McMillan Works Contracting with their patience and for embracing his unconventional style. He also credits his wife Veronica, who entrusted him with designing their home. While Veronica had input on colours and some decorating within the home, she knew that Bruce had a vision for their home. After many years of dreaming, both Bruce and Veronica couldn't be happier with the results of their eclectic new – yet old-inspired – home. As Bruce proudly says, "it's been my once-in-a-lifetime build". **H**

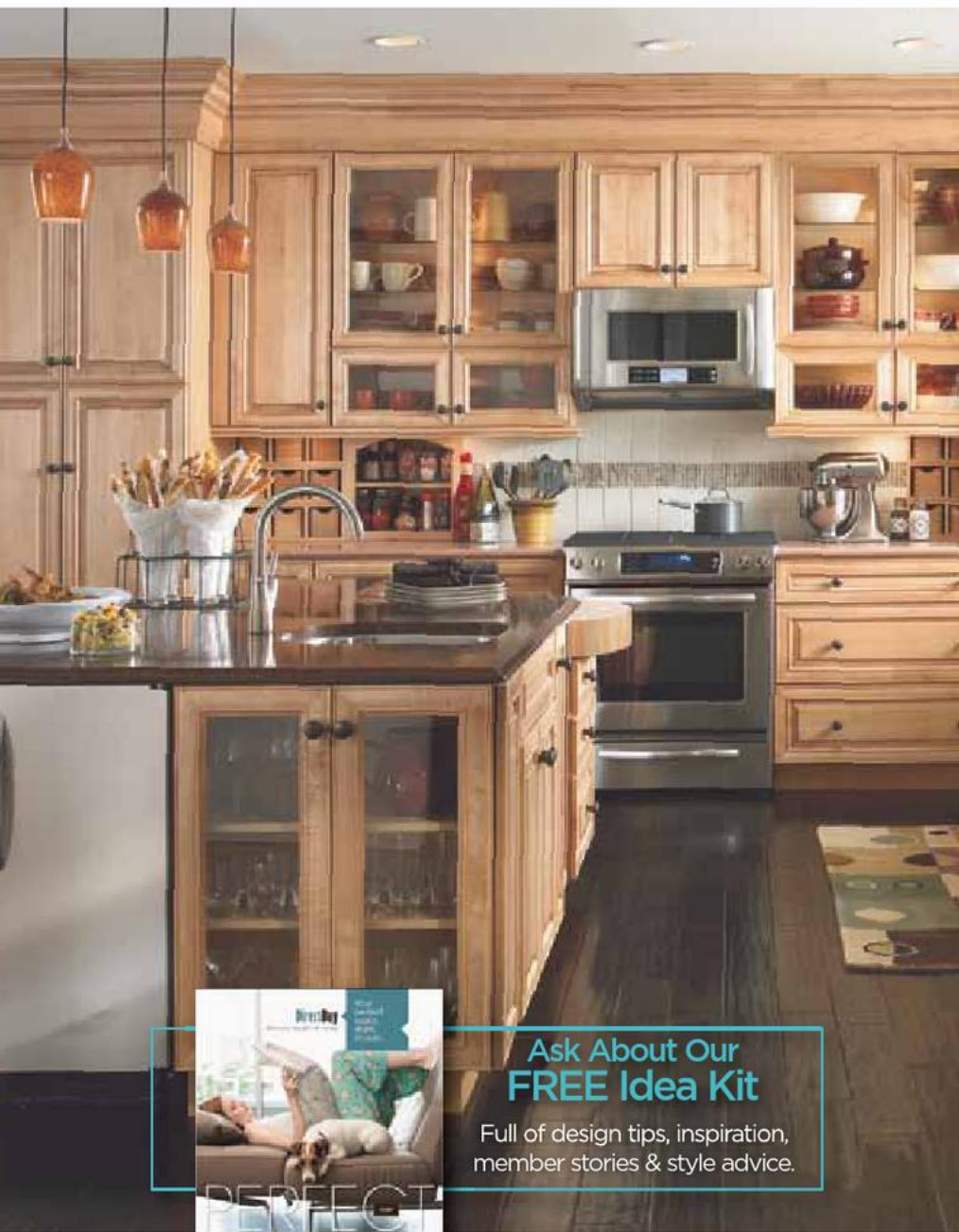


Veronica completely trusted Bruce's eclectic vision for their dream home.



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# BRITISH INVASION

The British - they're everywhere. Whether watching the Royal Family's shenanigans play out in the tabloids or singing along with Adele on the radio, you don't have to be an anglophile to get your fill of our Commonwealth companions. Now that trend is moving into your living space with a hot new English theme taking design by storm.

"From Big Ben to the iconic double-decker bus, a weathered red and blue Union Jack flag inlay to the architectural magnificence of the London Eye, British themed art and decor pieces add a chic, sophisticated, urban quality to your home's

style," says Jennifer Lucky, manager of Saskatoon's Charter House Interiors.

With the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee in June, the London Summer Olympics and the popularity of Kate and William still riding high, British design influence was a noteworthy trend in 2012. London taxis, bridges and classic red telephone booths are showing up on bedding, furniture, wall art, home decor accessories, rugs and lots of throw pillows.

Keeping with this rich and multi-layered theme, muted reds and blue are enjoying time in the limelight as accent colors.

*Jack Chair from ur\_style by Brentwood Classics*



*Fab 4 Armless Love Seat from ur\_style by Brentwood Classics*

The bold British Union Jack found itself on chair upholstery, wall art, pillows and more for a fresh pop of culture and eclectic style.

Whether taking this theme all the way and decking out your walls with Union Jack flag wallpaper, or adding subtle accents throughout a space to create a focal piece or personal statement, the British home fashion invasion is a trend to watch for in decor found around the city. 

*Tammy Robert*



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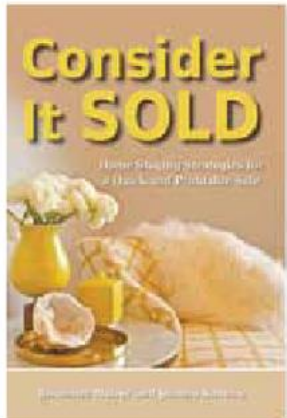
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# THE GRAND ENTRANCE

## HOW TO CREATE A FABULOUS FIRST IMPRESSION OF YOUR HOME

No matter friend, foe, stranger or kin; everyone arrives on your threshold first. The entryway is the first chapter in the story about you and your living space. Oddly, this space is often the most neglected. It's the afterthought on the list of home décor improvements. With a little attention, you can create a great first impression and tell a story about who lives inside.

Angelica Fehr, owner of Twisted Goods, says there's a lot of untapped potential in the entryway area to give both a message of welcome and offer a style statement.

"It surprises me how often the front door seems to be a design afterthought, especially when you think of the hundreds of people who see it," she says. "Most of us have only a handful of people who come inside compared to all those people who drive or walk by our entryway. It's an area we can have a lot of fun with."

Barbara Shawcross of Realistic Redesign says it

pays to devote attention to both form and function. It's not always a case of 'one way fits all' so think of the space as dynamic, depending on what's going on within.

"How you use that space changes if you're just carrying in the groceries or if you're having 20 guests over for a dinner party," says Barbara, who is a member of Canadian Certified Staging Professionals.

"People spend only a couple of minutes in an entryway but it's the first impression. It's good to put a little bit of thought and effort into it," she insists. This is the area that can set the tone for your home, and whether you're into vintage, craftsman or minimalism, you can find colours and pieces that encapsulate the welcome you want to give.

### The frame at first glance

You may want to select a combination of elements depending on your space and taste, whether you have a separate entryway, a sun

porch, or a covered entry.

The doorframe itself offers a structure for garlands and greenery, but also think of framing the entire entryway. Set the stage with planters, vases, seasonal plants and flowers, and objects that give the space personality.

"People are becoming much more creative with accessories around the front door," says Angelica. "Think of it as putting on different kinds of jewelry for different occasions."

### The door

Everyone has one. The door itself can be a topic of conversation and with so many colours, styles, and inserts available, there's no reason to announce 'boring' to your visitors.

"One of my favourite ways to personalize is with a door hanging. They can be inspirational, formal, or casual, extravagant to very simple," says Angelica. "Wreaths are one of my favourite accessories. Another fun

accessory is a decal." Door decals featuring words or phrases are low maintenance, and easily changeable with seasons or occasions.

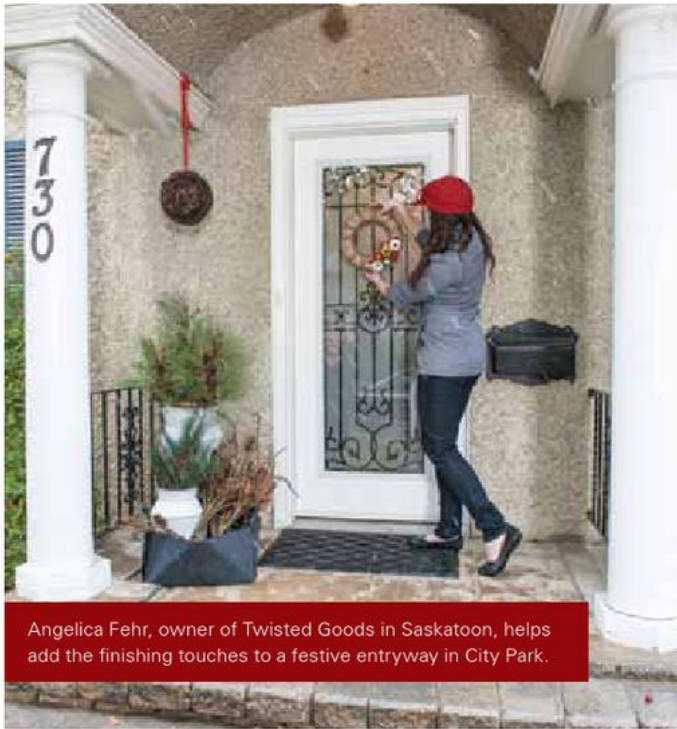
There's no rule of thumb when it comes to door colour, "as long as it is aesthetically pleasing and goes with your exterior," Angelica advises. "When I see fun door colours, it makes me wonder about the people who live in that house."

### The floor

Coping with Saskatchewan's distinct seasons is easy. Barbara doesn't like the look of the utilitarian plastic shoe trays, but no one wants muddy boots dripping on the Persian rug. Instead of the tray, pick up a couple inexpensive rubber-backed mats or runners for an event in your home.

"Choose a patterned mat," she advises. "It will hide dirt a lot better and if you can see into your living areas, look for a colour or pattern that ties in. I have entry rugs I love that I





Angelica Fehr, owner of Twisted Goods in Saskatoon, helps add the finishing touches to a festive entryway in City Park.

remove so they won't be out for heavy use. Be prepared with an attractive option."

#### In and out essentials

House numbers, mailboxes, security systems: You can't live without them, but you can add flair to function.

"You can turn these essentials into eye catching elements," says Angelica. "Even if you have one of those community mail boxes, you can still treat your mailbox as a fun accessory to give a friendly welcome, an 'I want to hear from you.'"

Illuminated house numbers are not only helpful to those trying to find your address, but also add elegance.

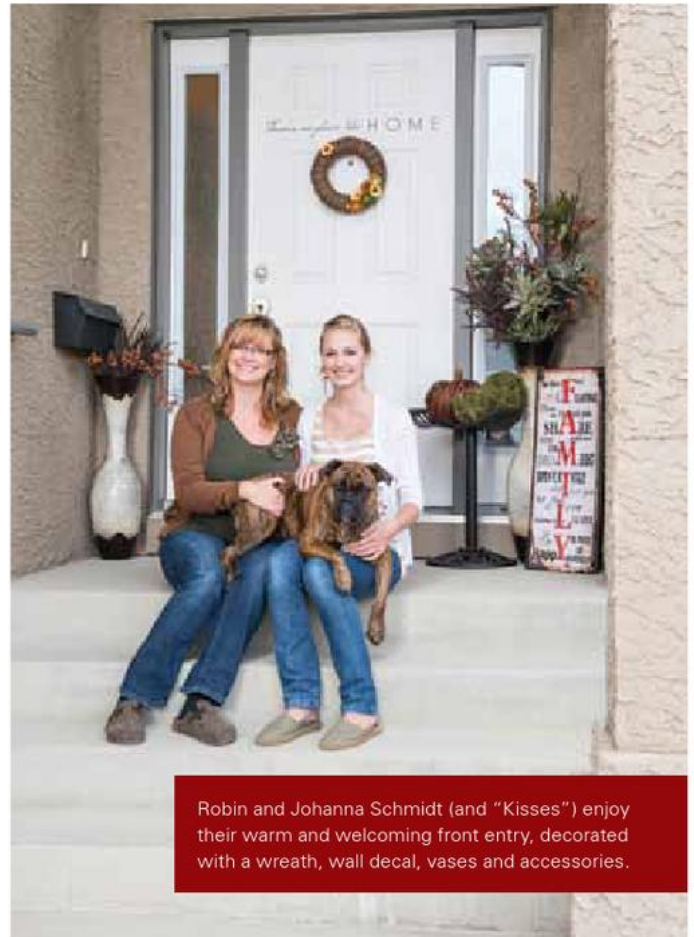
Inside, Barbara's top recommendation for foyer lighting is to invest in a great 'up and out of the way' fixture, keeping in mind that scale is as important as style.

"You don't want to be too obnoxious" in a relatively small area, but the right fixture can ensure the space is well lit, and offers "some pizzazz." In an entryway often populated with people taking off coats and footwear, wall art or pieces on a side table may be knocked off.

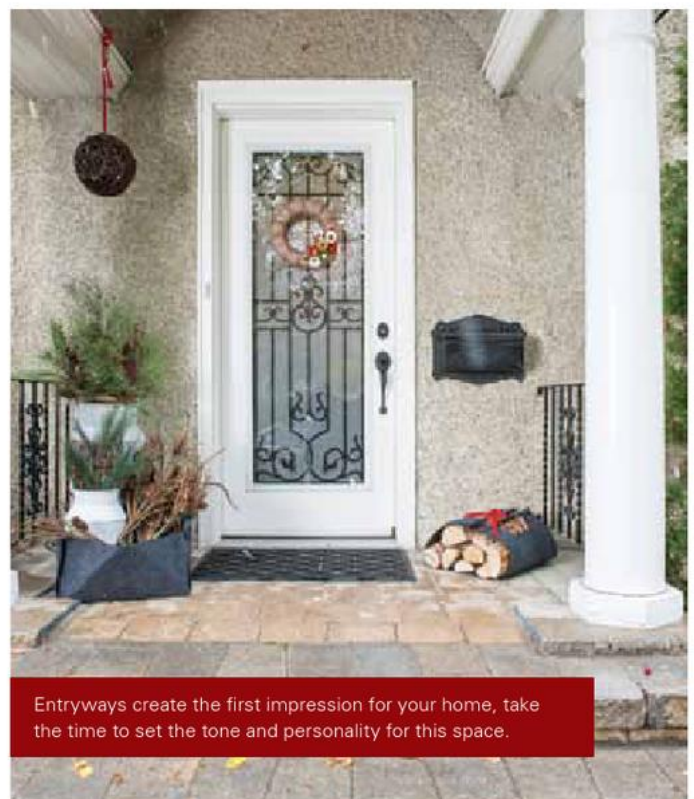
Security is good, not always pretty. Some older home security systems feature an unattractive plastic housing or lid over the keypad. A small, inexpensive artist's brush works well to camouflage it with your wall colour.

#### A lasting first impression

For Angelica and Barbara, your doorstep should exude warmth and welcome. Put your best foot forward with bit of attention to this often forgotten space, and your guests' first footfall will be met with a good first impression. **H**



Robin and Johanna Schmidt (and "Kisses") enjoy their warm and welcoming front entry, decorated with a wreath, wall decal, vases and accessories.



Entryways create the first impression for your home, take the time to set the tone and personality for this space.





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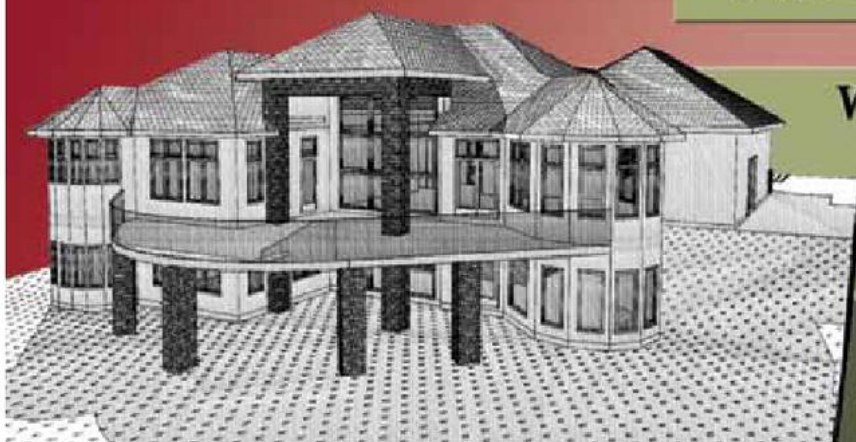
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22nd Street at 4th Avenue, circa 1913, showing a thriving neighbourhood of single-family dwellings in what is now an almost exclusively commercial district.

*Photo courtesy of the Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library*

As anyone who has driven our streets lately can tell you, Saskatoon's population is growing at an enormous rate. With that growth has come much debate. Do we build up, or out? What should we build, and where? Is there enough rental accommodation? Parking? How much will it all cost? Once again, our city's rapid growth is forcing all of us to look closely at where we're headed and how we're going to get there.

For some years now, the city has been pushing a plan to get people to move downtown. Downtown residents use less space, have fewer transportation needs and don't need expensive new roads, or added sewer, water and electrical lines. They walk more and drive less. And a downtown with people in it is one that comes alive at night, with shops and grocery stores, places to eat and drink and be entertained, one with people out on the sidewalks

and in the plazas, walking their dogs, playing with their children and simply behaving as people always behave in the place they call home. There are few things so sad, boring and outright dangerous as a downtown where the sidewalks roll up the minute the office lights go out.

About 2,800 people currently live downtown, a number that has stayed more-or-less constant since 1905. Back then, downtown was the biggest dog on the block compared to tiny little Nutana and Riversdale. But Saskatoon was booming in the years prior to the First World War, and the balance changed quickly. A civic census taken in 1912 showed that out of a total population of 28,000, the downtown had remained the same while Nutana had exploded to nearly 6,000 people and Riversdale to almost 4,000.

The downtown population hit 3,700 in the early

1940s, but dropped back again after the war, as business and commercial uses began to compete with residential for space, and as people moved out into the new houses being built in Nutana and thereabouts. In 1963, it was 2,900, and since 1986 has stayed very close to 2,500, edging up slightly in the last couple of years. If the population has stayed the same, the demographics have changed immensely. In 1951, more than half the people living downtown were under the age of 45. Almost 400 of them were school-aged, and only 450 were over 65. Today, the number of retirees has almost tripled, while the number of school-aged children has dropped to about 50. Once, the downtown boasted three schools: Tech, on the riverbank, St. Paul's on 22nd Street and King Edward, on 25th Street next to Kinsmen Park. Today, it has none.

Until recently, the downtown housing inventory has been somewhat eclectic. By 1913, downtown was home to a bustling commercial district, but large chunks of it were still residential, with many blocks of predominantly single family homes, duplexes, row houses and small apartment buildings. Even the more built-up parts often had isolated homes squeezed in here and there between the shops and garages – holdovers from earlier eras. Then, as now, retail buildings would have had offices and apartments above, sometimes occupied by the proprietors of the premises below. There were apartments in odd places, too – one resident from the 1940s (see below) recalls a family living in the top floor of King Edward School, and another above the old Park Funeral Chapel. Hotel staff often lived in the establishments they worked at, and the downtown



hotels catered to both transients and permanent roomers. Indeed, by the latter part of the 20th century, the clientele of older hotels such as the Queen's and the Windsor tended to be made up almost exclusively of long-term residents. It seems fitting that the once-grand Empire Hotel on Second Avenue – its exterior “modernized” in the 1960s to the point of blandness – has been transformed into the Lighthouse, which today provides emergency shelter and affordable, independent living.

Both the YMCA, on Spadina Crescent, and the YWCA, on the corner of 3rd Avenue and 24th Street, had residences, as did Rosary Hall, a girls' residence on the corner of 21st Street and Spadina Crescent operated by the Sisters of Sion from 1917 until the mid-1970s. There were boarding and rooming houses a-plenty; the municipal Register of Rooming Houses lists 17 such establishments downtown in 1916, in addition to eight hotels.

One type of housing unique to downtown was the converted office block. When Saskatoon's building boom collapsed in 1913, many of the city's more prominent citizens found themselves the unhappy owners of brand-new buildings full of empty, unrentable office space. Staring at financial ruin, they asked City Council to exempt them from the provincial plumbing code so they could rent the offices out as apartments without having to pay for the necessary additional plumbing. Only one alderman, Dr. Alexander



Boys playing marbles at a “Dib Derby” on the grounds of St. Paul's High School, downtown at 22nd Street and 4th Avenue in 1954. Saskatoon boasted three downtown schools: St. Paul's, the Technical Collegiate and King Edward.

*Photo courtesy of the Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library*

MacGillvray Young, spoke against the idea of having half a dozen families share a single bath and toilet. Most of the office blocks built on Third Avenue during the boom remained residential, many of them for years with the same inadequate plumbing.

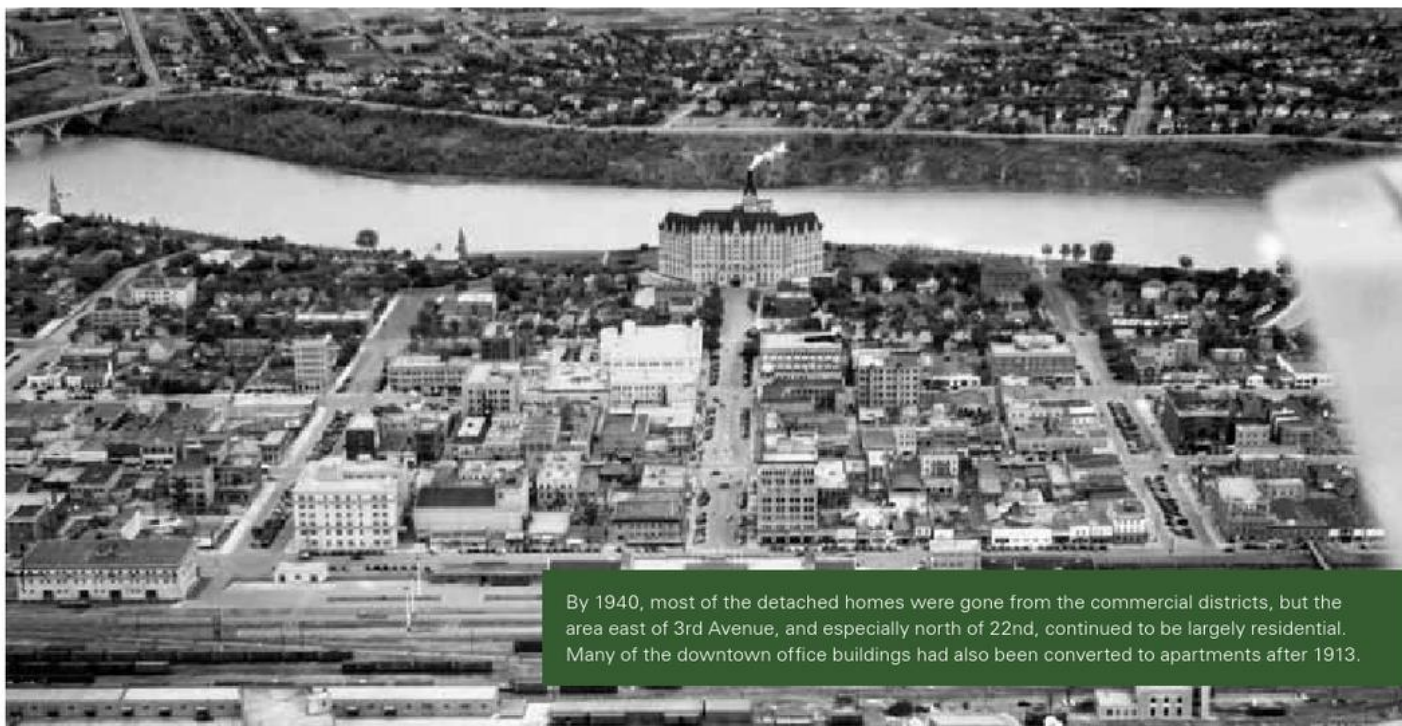
What was it like to live downtown? Penny Werle, writing about growing up in an apartment above her father's store on 22nd Street in the 1940s, paints a child's picture of a close-knit community, one with plenty of sidewalk space for roller skating (on Sundays, when all the shoppers were gone) and grassy vacant lots to play in, not to mention the riverbank and Kinsmen Park, or the lawn of the old Court House on 21st Street. There was skating on the rink at

4th Avenue and 25th Street, sledding in an abandoned excavation behind City Hall, and stores like Kresge's and Woolworth's to explore. “When you lived downtown,” she ends wistfully, “the sidewalks, the back alleys, the empty evening parking lots were yours.”

That downtown is not today's downtown. There are no more houses. A few buildings that used to be houses, yes, but people don't live in them now. The row houses are gone too, swallowed up by offices and apartment towers and parking lots. The vacant lots are all gone too. But people still live downtown, and the city is hoping that many more will join them in the next few years – 10,000 of them, in fact. Possibly more.

The seniors' residences and apartment towers have been joined by a raft of new condominium conversions including the Fairbanks-Morse warehouse on 23rd Street, the elegant old Rumely Tractor building on Pacific, the Hudson's Bay store and the King George Hotel – once again one of the downtown's most beautiful buildings. And more will follow. As the debate continues about how Saskatoon will grow – how much “up” and how much “out” – people are drifting back into the downtown. And where there are people, there will be lights, and life, grocery stores and bakeries, and children playing outside. Perhaps there will even be schools. 





By 1940, most of the detached homes were gone from the commercial districts, but the area east of 3rd Avenue, and especially north of 22nd, continued to be largely residential. Many of the downtown office buildings had also been converted to apartments after 1913.

*Photo courtesy of City of Saskatoon Archives*

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# BATHROOM AND KITCHEN CONVENIENCES


Many of us overlook small inconveniences in our home because we think there is no alternative. Robyn Henke, a co-owner of the locally owned and operated Flo-Essence Plumbing, Hearth & Decor, offers a number of solutions to some of the common irritants in our bathrooms and kitchens.

An ongoing source of annoyance in the kitchen is keeping the sink drain free of debris. Novanni, a Canadian company, has created the 'Perfect Drain' seamless sink that eliminates the gap around the drain, creating a beautiful streamlined design that is a breeze to clean.

Moving into the bathroom, if you get exasperated cleaning the curves and bumps of the toilet and disgusted with discovering particles wedged into the bolt cover crevices, a 'closed trap' toilet may be the solution to your woes. The toilet has flat sides so there are not bolts to maneuver around while cleaning

and no curved trap to collect dust and debris. The American Studio model boasts a quick release and slow close toilet seat which is easily removed for cleaning. The high water levels in these low flow dual flush toilets also reduce marks left behind.

You may desire a shower after strenuous cleaning, but leaving its warmth can be a physically painful experience, particularly during frigid Saskatoon winters. The Turin Shower by Fleurco has a door that partially opens to access a towel rack and shelves for creams and lotions, without allowing that initial blast of cold air one expects when exiting the shower.

Small daily hassles can add up to significant exasperation. Next time you get frustrated cleaning or find yourself freezing after a relaxing shower, remember that there might be a product out there that can make your life both easier and more enjoyable. Hopefully these products inspire you and set you on the right track! 

*Rachel Clare*



*Photo courtesy of Fleurco Products Inc*



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